

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 4, 2008

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen's Room.

Present were Margaret B. Briggs, Chair; Virginia McIntyre; Anne D. Shapiro; Stanly E. Black, and Gregory P. Howes, Clerk. Also present was Christopher Whelan, Town Manager.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Town Accountant's Warrants
- Minutes: December 21, 2008
- Gift Acceptance: Concord-Carlisle Community Chest \$1,200 to the Council on Aging Mental Health Worker Gift Account; Concord-Carlisle Community Chest \$2,500 to the Council on Aging Volunteer Coordinator Gift Account; Concord-Carlisle Community Chest \$1,250 to the Fire Department Gift Account; Concord-Carlisle Community Chest \$5,775 to the Community Services Coordinator Gift Account; Friends of CC Playing Fields \$10,000 to the Alcott Baseball Field Account.

Upon a Motion duly made and Seconded, the Board UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED: approve the Consent Agenda as read.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. The gift for the Alcott Baseball Field is for the renovations to the field on Laurel Street.
2. The State Primary Election is on February 5 from 7AM to 8PM. Already the Town Clerk has received more than 600 Absentee Ballots.
3. With the latest storm the Snow and Ice Account expenditures are close to the full appropriation. There is also \$140,000 available in the snow and ice reserve.
4. The Hearing on the 350 unit Trammel Crow development has been continued until February 14.
5. The Village Study Report has been released. The Committee hopes to prioritize its recommendations after hearing from the public.
6. Starbucks on Thoreau St. has implemented new signage regarding safety. The Police Department continues to monitor compliance in an effort to determine whether a parking attendant is warranted.
7. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Committee will have a public meeting at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center on February 12 to take comment on the consultant's report.
8. Giving continues to the Board of Selectmen's Annual Appeal. There have been more than 250 donors and more than \$51,000 contributed. Funds are being directed to tax relief.
9. Verizon representatives will attend the next Board meeting to speak about the company plans for FIOS in Concord.
10. The Town website has been reorganized to provide easier access to important documents. Comments are welcome.
11. Playing Fields work continues with completion expected in April. A plan to test air quality has not been finalized. The School Committee has learned that testing will be lengthy, costly and results are not likely to be clear.
12. The town of Carlisle has asked for Concord's assistance in covering their building inspections. While the towns have assisted during vacations or illness, the department is too busy to take on this role permanently.

COMMITTEE LIAISON

Mr. Howes stated that Representative Atkins has asked for the Board's priorities for the next year. The consensus was roads program funding and bridge safety upgrades. MMA may take a position on 40T legislation.

Consent Agenda

Town Manager's
Report

Committee Liaisons

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Mr. Howes reported that the Light Board has approved the purchase of 50% of the natural gas for its Morgan Stanley contract. The Board will consult with a risk management consultant the timing of the purchase of the remaining 50%.

Mr. Black reported that Alexan Concord and the Avalon Bay proposal for housing will be on the Planning Board agenda on February 14. The Planning Board has denied the proposal to build housing on Annursnac Hill Road. However, Bentley Builders secured a permit for 20 units of housing on the Strawberry Hill Road parcel. Once the appeal period expires the Town will close on the land purchase.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING

Upon a Motion duly made and Seconded, the Board UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED: to Open the Hearing.

Connie Johnson, Chair of the Board of Assessors updated the Board on the Department of Revenue certification of new values which makes it possible to issue new tax bills. Ms. Johnson stated that after the several months of arduous negotiations with DOR the Concord rate remained unchanged. Therefore the Board of Assessors recommends that the Selectmen approve similar Motions. This would result in a tax rate of \$10.72 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation. Last year the rate was \$10.56.

Ms. Johnson stated that during December the Assessors were in almost daily contact with DOR in an attempt to understand the department's direction. In the end, DOR wanted the Assessors to handle the matter of excess land differently. Many towns experienced that same experience with DOR analysis.

Ms. McIntyre asked whether the DOR analysis of excess land is likely to change the Assessors recommendation on an Open Space Discount. She stated that there are eleven parcels with more than 5 acres and not subject to a Conservation Restriction on which there is intense pressure to develop. In her opinion, the discount could provide some relief and that tax policy should not force an action that harms the Town.

Ms. Johnson stated that there are more than 120 parcels more than five acres in size and most are receiving some kind of tax preference. The Assessors will work with the eleven parcels noted.

Ms. Johnson noted that the DOR delay in certification has changed the usual process for the Assessors to deal with corrections and abatements, which begins upon receipt of the tax bill. It is hoped to complete the process by May 1 this year.

Upon a Motion duly made and Seconded the Board

VOTED: to approve a Residential Factor of 1. At a uniform tax rate, the tax levy per thousand dollars of assessed valuation is \$10.72. (unanimous)

VOTED not to grant an open space discount. (unanimous).

VOTED not to adopt a Residential Exemption. (4-yes, McIntyre-no)

VOTED not to grant a Small Commercial Exemption (unanimous)

TOWN MANAGER'S FY09 BUDGET REVIEW

One copy of the preliminary budget book placed in the Selectmen's Room over the weekend. Discussion will be deferred until the next meeting when the full narrative is available.

375TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Meg Gaudet was present to seek permission to begin to plan activities noting the 375th Birthday of the Town. The Town has a tradition of celebrating every 25 years, sometimes more or less energetically. Ms. Gaudet presented a Charge for a committee based on the 350th celebration. Ms. Gaudet stated that the Town holds funds for celebrations and that she envisioned a need for additional monies for events such as fireworks and a gift to the Town. She also expected that the new committee would assist the Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee in expanded celebrations that year. The new committee would focus on the September 12 birthday, not Patriots Day.

Upon a Motion duly made and Seconded, the Board UNANIMOUSLY

Tax Classification
Hearing

FY09 Budget Review

375 Birthday

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VOTED: to develop a Charge and call for Green Cards for a Committee to plan and implement events to celebrate the 375th anniversary of the Town's incorporation on September 12, 2010.

GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENT TO CONCORD HOUSING AUTHORITY

Richard Eifler of Pleasant St. has agreed to make himself available as a candidate for appointment to the Housing Authority. The Board reviewed his resume and agreed to pass his name to Governor Patrick.

Gov. Appt. CHA

Upon a Motion duly made and Seconded, the Board UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED: to authorize the Chair to draft and transmit a letter to Governor Patrick acknowledging the Board's support of the appointment of Richard W. Eifler of 14 Pleasant Street as the Governor's appointee to the Concord Housing Authority.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Meg Gaudet of Maple St. noted the progress being made on renovations to the West Concord Depot. She commended the many people involved.

Citizen Comment

MISCELLANEOUS/CORRESPONDENCE

1. Ms. Shapiro acknowledged the many gifts from Community Chest that benefit Town initiatives.
2. Ms. Shapiro stated that she was a supporter of bike paths and was grateful to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Committee for all its work. However, she believes that work on the trail should stop until the MBTA has a plan for the trail to cross the tracks in West Concord.
3. Ms. Briggs stated that the consultant has delivered the report of the Rail Trail Consultants and that it is available on the Town web site.
4. Ms. McIntyre stated that the Agriculture Committee is considering a community dinner in the fall that builds on local foods movement. It would occur on the Milldam and include music and dancing.
5. Mr. Howes noted receipt of mail from Rep. Tsongas encouraging the Town to secure funds from federal grants. He stated that she did not include information on what funds were available. Some communities hire staff to research and write grant proposals to reduce the impact on local taxes.
Ms. McIntyre noted that the Town has discovered that some grant funds come with strings attached. She would recommend that the Town set its goals and then find funding rather than identify funding and set a goal to implement the funds.

Misc./Correspondence

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Open Session and to enter into Executive Session to consider two matters of land acquisition, not to return to open session.

Adjourn

Anne D. Shapiro	Aye
Virginia McIntyre	Aye
Stanly E. Black	Aye
Gregory P. Howes	Aye
Margaret B. Briggs	Aye

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory P. Howes, Clerk